(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Expansion of Government Steel Plants

1192. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) when the last expansion in respect of each Government Steel Plant was undertaken by Government during the last three years;

(b) what are the details thereof (plant-wise) indicating cost over-run because of the delay in execution of the expansion/production capacity (year-wise) till date;

(c) what efforts Government have made, so far, to inquire into the matter and whether any official has been found guilty; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) Government Steel Plants have not undertaken any expansion scheme during the last three years.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Losses by Steel Plants

1193. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to depression in the steel market our steel plants, both in private/public sectors, are incurring huge losses;

(b) if so, what is the total loss figure, year-wise for the last three years suffered by our domestic industry; and

(c) what are Government's plans to revamp Indian steel industry which is facing hard competition in the world market after globalisation indicating the budgetary provisions made during 1999-2000 period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) and (b) Information regarding the profit/ loss of public and private sector steel plants, during last three years, is as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Name of the Company	Profit/Loss (−) during		
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
A. Public Sector			
1. SAIL	515	133	(−)1574
2. RINL	(−)246	(−)177	(−)469
B. Private Sector			
1. TISCO Ltd.	469.21	322.08	282.46
2. Ispat Industries Ltd.	78.83	55.17	25.08
3. ESSAR Steel Ltd.	9.62	24.70	(−)496.45
4. Lloyed Steel Ltd.	91.70	(−)38.42	(−)211.12
5. Jindal I&S Co. Ltd.	50.03	31.24	10.80
6. Jindal Strips Ltd.	55.71	73.31	37.36*

*Reduction in profit is mainly due to incorporation of a separate company to manage the unit of Jindal Strips in MP.

(c) Several measures are being taken by Public Sector Steel Companies to improve their profitability and to face global competition. These measures include:—

(i) Reduction in operational costs by reducing input costs, reducing comsumption of raw materials and other inputs and by increasing operating efficiencies;

(ii) Improvement in techno-economic parameters such as fuel and power consumption;

(iii) Increased recovery for services/facilities;

(iv) Righ sizing manpower through a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS);

(v) Asset restructuring;

(vi) Disposal of idle assets; and

(vii) Financial restructuring.

Government provides an appropriate policy regime to encourage private steel plants for adopting modern cost effective technologies in the steel plants in the country. Towards this objective, the following policy measures have been taken:

(i) automatic approval up to a limit of US $ 2 million for foreign technology agreements; and

(ii) automatic approval for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) upto 74% of the equity.

However initiatives for revamping the private sector steel plants so as to become competitive in the world market have to come from the entrepreneurs themselves.

No budgetary support is being extended by government to the steel producing public sector companies, for revamping. Private sector companies are not eligible for any budgetary support.

Indo-China Joint Venture in Steel Sector

†1194. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any talks have been held recently between India and China for setting up a joint-venture in steel sector;

(b) if so, its salient features; and

(c) the outcome of the talks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) to (c) A Chinese delegation visited India from 22nd to 26th November, 1999. Collaboration in the area of technology transfer and enhanced co-operation in the iron and steel sector figured during the discussions between the two sides.

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.